नववर्ष-बन्दनम्

Navavarsha-Vandanam

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- Name— नववर्ष-वन्दनम्
  A poem in Sanskrit on
  The New Year, 1992.

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- Publisher— Sri S. Mishra,
  Buguda (Ganjam)

- Edition— 1st Junuary, 1992

- Printer— Buddheswari Press,
  Bhubaneswar-751006.

- Price— Rs. 5-00

DEDICATION

I dedicate this poem in Sanskrit to **Dr. P. Ranga Reddy** (Sarojini Devi Eye-Hospital, Hyderabad), whose dedication to the cause of human happiness, extending over several decades has won for him the heart-felt commendations of thousands and thousands of persons, suffering from eye-diseases, whose reputation as an eye-specialist of extraordinary capabilities has crossed the geographical bounds of Andhra Pradesh and has reached the farthest corners of the sub-continent of India and whose proficiency in the domain of eye-operations impresses his patients that he is a "divine messanger", ever prepared to redress the miseries of human beings, suffering from eye-diseases, as an integral part of his mission to serve humanity with a clear conscience, affectionate assiduity and diligent devotion.

Prof. G. K. Brahma

PREFACE

The Orissa Sahitya Akademi held a Poets' Conference in January, 1992 on the occasion of the New Year's Day, 1992. As a participant in the conference, I composed this poem in Sanskrit (as requested) and recited it there. At the request of my friends, the poem has now been published with meaning in English (by me). Thanks are due to Engineer Sri Swadesh Misra for having published it as a mark of his love for Sanskrit.

I am thankful to the Akademi for their kind invitation. There have been minor additions to and alterations of the poem that I recited in the conference.

Prof. Gouri Kumar Brahma

नववर्ष-वन्दनम्

1. I Welcome you, Oh New Year, 1992 !

सुस्वागतं हे नव-वर्ष ! तूर्णं
काम्यं जनानां च कुरुष्व पूर्णम् ।
जानाति नूनं जनताऽग्रजं ते
न केऽपि तं संप्रति कामयन्ते ॥ १ ॥

Oh New Year ! I Welcome you Without any further delay, kindly fulfil the desires of the people. Your elder brother (i.e. the year that has just passed away) is well-known to all of us. But no body likes him now (in view of what the people have come to know of him).

2. My joy knows no bounds to see 1992 comming.

यथा वसन्तागमने पिकालिः
त्वन्-मे तथा हृष्यति मानसालिः ।
प्राणाश्च मे हर्षवशात्-प्रफुल्लाः
करेषु भानोः स्फुट-पद्म-तुल्याः ॥ २ ॥

When the spring (season) comes, the cockoo becomes very much happy. Like-wise, my mind, which is like a bumble-bee, is now full of joy due mainly to your arrival. My praanas or life-forces (five in number, according to our shaastras) also are filled wiht joy and mirth. They are now comparable to fully blossomed lotuses, smiling in bright sun-light. (त्वन्=त्वत्= On account of you)

3. Let there be all-round Progress in the whole of India.

अत्रोड़िशायां वयमुत्कलीयाः-
तथाऽपि नो भारत-मातृकायाः ।
सुताश्च सर्वेऽखिल-भारतस्य
मन्यामहे सुप्रगतिं च तस्य ॥ ३ ॥

Here, in Orissa, we are the "sons of the soil" (i e. are Oriyas, no doubt), but we are all the children of Mother India basically. Therefore, we, the people of Orissa wish sincerely that (with the coming of the New Year) there should be all-round progress in the entire Republic of India, engaged in the pursuit of spiritual light ("All-round Progress" includes political, social, economic, industrial, cultural, ethical, and other types of advancement).

4. Let 1992 be a year of happiness for all.

दुःखं जनानां सकलं हर त्वं
देहे त्वदीये विशताऽमरत्वम् ।
त्वामेव मन्ये शुभदं हि वर्ष
तनुष्व सर्वेषु मुखेषु हर्षम् ॥ ४ ॥

Oh New Year ! I request you earnestly to put an end to the sorrows or miseries of the people in general. I wish that you should be equipped with divine powers (so that you can reduce the miseries of the people). I fell that this year (1992) would be auspicious for all of us. Therefore, kindly make every body happy so that feelings of joy and happiness will find expression on their faces.

5. Let there be an end to tortures by dowry-loving persons.

हत्या वधूनां धनवर्जितानां
वभूव कृत्यं नर-राक्षसानाम् ।
हे मित्र ! मुक्ताः तव दृष्टिपातात्
भवन्तु ता यौतुक-दण्ड-घातात् ॥ ५ ॥

Last year (as we could know from the news papers), many fathers-in-law or mothers-in-law (and their supporters in their families) acted as demons (of Hindu mythology) with regard to their young daughters in-law, as their parents could not give riches as dowry. Oh my (New) friend ! kindly save such young ladies from the tortures due to their inability to satisfy the dowry-loving and greedy persons by casting over them (the young brides), the spell of your blissful vision.

6. Let people be provided with pure food.

खाद्यं पदार्थं विकृतं न शुद्धं
मिष्टापणादावपि नो विशुद्धम् ।
तैलादि-वस्तूनि च तादृशानि
सर्वाणि शुद्धानि कुरुष्व तानि ॥ ६ ॥

In the whole country (and not merely in Orissa), the food that people eat has become impure and purity of food stuffs has become rare In the hotels and sweet-meat stalls, we are served with very bad types of food and tiffin. Even oil and other important items of food are all adulterated (and are, therefore, danger-ous for health). Oh New Year ! kindly do the needful so that purity of food stuffs could be maintained.

7 Let there be an end to tortures on Women.

सम्वाद-पत्रेषु इमा हि वार्त्ताः
सर्वत्र नार्यो गण-धर्षणार्त्ताः ।
हत्या नराणां, गृहदाह-कर्म
निरस्य सर्वाणि, विधेहि शर्म ॥ ७ ॥

We read in the news papers daily that due to mass rapings, our womenfolk are brutally tortured. Added to this, murders and the burning of houses (in the villages) are also becoming very common. Oh New Year ! we request you to put a stop to all this and be a source of solace and peace for the people.

8. Let there be an end to extremism

सुसंहतं भारतमेकराष्ट्रं
परन्तु राज्येषु च केषु कष्टम् ।
आसीद् गभीरं न कुरु त्वमेवं
कुरुष्व निर्वापितमुग्रभावम् ॥ ८ ॥

Our Country (or mother-land) Bhaarata-Varsha is essentially One. But in some states or parts of our Country, people had to suffer a lot very deeply last year (as in Kashmir, Punjab, Assam and Tamilnadu) due to the activities of the extremists I pray that you should be kind enough (Oh New Year !) to put an end to such anti-social activities.

9. Let. Govt. offices be free from Corruption.

राज्येऽस्मदीये खलु सर्वकार-
कार्यालयादौ सततं चचार ।
दुर्नीति-देवी, ननु तां स्वशक्त्या
वहिष्कुरु त्वं कथयेऽनुरक्त्या ॥ ९ ॥

(We have noticed that) last year, the Lady of Corruption was moving always in the Government Offices of our state, without any kind of check imposed on HER. Oh New Year ! I submit most affectionately before you that you should drive HER out of our Govt. offices by your own powers (and protect the common people or the have-nots) from the atrocities of that Lady.

10. Let our Ministers be free from Corruption and be loved by one and all.

वैधेन कार्येण च मन्त्रिवर्याः–
मुदा लभन्तां जनुषां सपर्याः ।
हे वर्ष ! ते जीवन-काल-मध्ये
विशन्तु ते कर्माणि कष्टसाध्ये ॥ १० ॥

I wish that our Ministers should be loved /admired/ felicitated by one and all and not merely by some people who are in direct contact with them and who are helped by them (for what ever reason). This should take place through such actions or activities of the Ministers as are legal and free from corruption. Oh New Year ! I wish also that during your regime, our Ministers should execute such plans and programms (in the greater interests of the people) as would be an up-hill task for the others. (In other words, Ministers should take up major projects with a clean mind so that large sections of people would be benefitted).

11. Let our higher officials set aside the wrong directives of even powerful Ministers.

अस्मद्-वरिष्ठा अधिकारिणोऽपि
क्षिपन्तु दूरं यदि वा प्रतापी ।
मन्त्रीवरो दास्यति दुर्निदेशं
दुर्नीतिमुक्तं कुरु मे स्वदेशम् ॥ ११ ॥

At the same time, our higher officials (whether Secretaries or M.Ds. or G Ms. or Engineers or Doctors or I.P.S. etc.) should be firm in the due discharge of their duties. Even when a very powerful Minister gives an illegal, wrong or improper order, the higher officials should not carry them out and should throw them off (to be worthy of the seats they occupy). Oh New Year ! make our country 'corruption-free' and provide the people with clean administration.

12. Let there be speedy afforestation.

आसीत् पुरा सुन्दर-काननानि
जीवैः सुवृक्षैः परिपूरितानि ।
शनैः शनैः ध्वंसगतानि तानि
तेषां कृते त्वं कुरु हे शुभानि ॥ १२ ॥

We had in the past very beautiful forests. Varieties of birds, beasts, trees (and creepers) etc. constituted the beauty of our forests. But gradually, they are on the decline (as deforestation is in progress). We wish that there should be a speedy revival of fresh plantations and careful preservation of the forests during 1992.

13. Let there be an end to road-accidents.

यानानि नानाविध-वाहनानि
चलन्ति नित्यं जन-सेवकानि ।
"न वर्द्धतां दुर्घटनानि तेषां"
चेष्टां तदर्थं कुरु हे विशेषाम् ॥ १३ ॥

Daily, numerous vehicles ply on our roads to help the people in their journies and travels. But road-accidents are constantly on the increase. We wish that the New Year should look into the matter care-fully and do the needful (so that, the people shall not be panic-stricken due to deaths or injuries).

14. Let there be proper thinking and action—

आचार शुद्धिर्न विचार शुद्धिः
संदृश्यते भीषण-भेद-बुद्धिः ।
आहार-शुद्धौ न मति-र्जनानां
तस्मात् विवृद्धिर्नु दुर्जनानाम् ॥ १४ ॥

People have neither purity of actions nor do they have clear thinking. Every where, there is a manifestation of the 'separatist attitude', which leads to nepotism. People are not keen on the purity of food. There is a steady rise in the number of anti-social elements.

15. Let there be good teaching in Schools and Colleges.

विद्यालयादौ च कलेज-संघे
कृत्यं गुरूणां पठन–प्रसंगे ।
प्रशंसनीयं न, मुखे जनानां
मनांसि क्षुण्णानि च सज्जनानाम् ॥ १५ ॥

In the context of the teaching in Schools and Colleges, the performance of the Gurus is not generally praised (by the concerned Sections). All good men in the Country express dissatisfaction over the teaching standards in our Schools and Colleges.

16. Let there be no caste-discriminations.

वर्ण्ण-व्यवस्था जन-मङ्गलार्था
तन्मूलनीतिर्न कदा निरर्था ।
न जाति-भेदोऽनुमतो हि तस्याः
समाधयेत् कः—त्वदृते समस्याः ॥ १६ ॥

In India, (in olden days) the entire community was divided into four Varnas (or classes, based on four important types of work or activity, required for the all-round development of the people) The basic interests of human principle of such classification was meaningless. But, in place of 'Varna', never we have wrongly implemented the classification of human beings into "Jaatis". This is not at all in conformity with Varna-Vyavasthaa. On account of this mistake, numerous problems have cropped up. Who else can slove such problems (other than your own self).

17. Let there be no communal clashes.

सन्त्यत्र नानाविध-धर्मसंस्थाः
पूजादि-पीठे विविधा व्यवस्थाः ।
कदा कदा भिन्नमतादशान्तिः
त्वया विधेया जनुपे प्रशान्तिः ॥ १७ ॥

In our country, there are various types of religious organisations and in the field of prayer and worship, there are diverse types of practices. Therefore, occasionally, rifts and frictions take place and the people are plunged into grief. It is our request (Oh New Year) that you should provide peace to the people in all such cases by avoiding serious situations.

18. Let not the prediction of Sipton come true.

सिप्टन्–भविष्यद्–वचनानुसारं
कुरुष्व न त्वं प्रलय-प्रसारम् ।
"विध्वंस वर्ष" न तवान्य–नाम
भूयाद् भवत्वं जन-सौख्य–धाम ॥ १८ ।

Mother Sipton of England Predicted (in the last quarter of the 15th century) that "The world will come to an end in 1992". But we request you not to translate it into action. Let not your second name be— "The year of Deluge or Destruction". We wish that you should be the abode of human happiness.

19. Let 1992 be a 'Godly Son' of Time, the Supreme Destroyer

कराल-कालस्य सुतोपमानि
वर्षाणि सर्वाणि न पीड़कानि ।
यथाऽसुरस्यापि ध्रुवः सुपुत्रः
तथा भव त्वं जनताऽऽतपत्रः ॥ १९ ॥

All the years are like the sons of Time, well-khown as the Supreme Destroyer. Just as, even a demon could have a godly son like Dhruva, like-wise, let you be a godly son of Time and act against human miseries.

20. We again pray to the New Year to make the people happy.

त्वं काल-जातः सुतरां सुशक्तः
नमामि भक्त्या नितरामशक्तः ।
त्वं सर्व-बन्धुः कुरुमामशोकं
पुनश्च दुःखाऽऽहत-सर्वलोकम् ॥ २० ॥

As you have come out of Time, you are really very powerful. I am extremely weak and helpless. I bow down before you with profound reverence. Kindly give relief to me and also to all those who are in distress.

* * *